



# California Table Grape Commission

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The Honorable Bill Thomas  
22nd District  
2208 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Thomas:

On behalf of California's fresh grape growers, the California Table Grape Commission strongly encourages your support of the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR).

The California fresh grape industry exports between 30-40% of its product on an annual basis, and the Central American region and the Dominican Republic are important export destinations. California table grapes face tariffs ranging from 14-20% in the markets covered by CAFTA-DR. Passage of CAFTA-DR would eliminate these tariffs immediately and would help ensure increased exports to Central America and the Dominican Republic in the future.

Equally important, a vote for CAFTA-DR is a vote for improved U.S. market access in other parts of the world. The California table grape industry is facing increasing competition from China, Australia, Mexico, Brazil and Spain, among other nations. These competitors are gaining tariff preferences in many of California's traditional markets and are taking away market share. Aggressive trade liberalization through U.S. FTAs and the WTO Doha round of negotiations is required to ensure California table grapes remain competitive in the global marketplace. A vote for CAFTA-DR would provide important momentum for U.S. trade negotiations in other parts of the world.

The California Table Grape Commission wants to emphasize that CAFTA-DR will increase exports and improve the ability of California fresh grape growers to compete in the global marketplace. We urge you to support the agreement. Thank you.

Best regards,

  
Kathleen Nave  
President